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shown in the table above are found in other parts of the Middle East but three indigenous sects need mention here: the Druses, who are a communal people professing a religion which derived from Islam in the eleventh century A.D., but became independent; the Alawis of the mountains behind Latakia, whose religion appears to be a dogmatic form of Shi'i Islam with some survivals of Christian ritual; and the Maronites, who are a Christian sect, living mainly in the north of Lebanon.

The religion of the majority of Syrians and of the head of the Syrian state is Sunni Islam; in the Lebanon, Muslims and Christians are fairly evenly divided and the President of the Republic is a Maronite Christian and the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim. The Christians of the Arab Levant have provided the Middle East with great leaders in journalism, letters, politics, and science, but in present-day Syria the Christians are mainly prominent in commerce and industry. There is hardly any dangerous animosity between the sects, but sectarian bonds are a very real force in the lives of people who for so long lived under the Turkish *millet* system whereby each sect was an administrative unit, the head of which exercised considerable authority.

So mixed a population living in a variety of environments naturally does not constitute one physical type, but some generalizations are hazarded for the sake of a fuller picture. Dark hair is almost universal but the skin of the town dweller is no darker than that of a Mediterranean European; the Syrians and Lebanese are not often as tall or as heavy as the average Englishman but they mature at an earlier age. The peasant's normal diet is mainly bread, with milk and fruit and vegetables as less frequent additions and meat as an event, but in the towns and villages most people eat a full diet with rather more oil and spice than is used in Britain. The cultivator and the nomad wear local costumes but most townspeople wear European clothes; the *tarbush* or fez head-cloth are usual but not universal headgear for men. Most Muslim women wear the veil, but in the towns the richer women are becoming more and more emancipated and, particularly in Beirut, many lead the same lives as Christian women. In Lebanon and in Damascus and Aleppo the way of life is very like that in southern Europe, and both countries make a pleasant home for a European.

History

Semitic-speaking people have inhabited for four or five millennia the area which is known historically as Syria, or yet for much of this period the rulers of what is now

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were on both sides. In Syria (and to a lesser degree, in Lebanon) the possibility of long-term co-operation between the nationalist politicians and the Mandatory was frustrated alike by the attitude of most French officials and by that of the local urban populations who, though they have signed the 1936 treaty, desired full self-government.[1] The advent to power in France of the Front Populaire in 1936 eased the situation; treaties with Syria and Lebanon were negotiated whereby the Mandate was to be transformed into an alliance with independent status, but under which France could still maintain troops in the Levant. However, the French Parliament was unwilling to ratify the Syrian treaty under the lengthening shadow of the impending Second World War, and Syrian indignation was increased when the cession to Turkey's friendship bill France in 1939 to cede to Turkey the Sanjaq of Alexandretta, afterwards renamed Hatay. Leading Syrian politicians refused to co-operate with the French on these terms, and on the eve of the outbreak of war the French High Commissioner once again suspended the Syrian constitution and governed the country through French and Syrian officials; the same procedure was applied to Lebanon after the outbreak of war.

When metropolitan France fell in 1940 the Mandate was carried on by the Vichy Government until the latter's acquiescence in the use of the Levant airfields by the Germans obliged the intervention of British and Free French forces in June 1941. After a short but bitter campaign, the Vichy forces signed an armistice in July 1941. In the struggle between the Allies and the Axis and between Vichy and de Gaulle the Syrians and Lebanese took no part, but their independence had been promised by the Allied Command. On behalf of the Free French, General Catroux, in a statement on 8 June 1941, proclaimed the end of the Mandate, but in fact the Free French regarded themselves as trustees for France's position, seeking to maintain them by installing Syrian and Lebanese supporters of France in the seats of authority. The Free French had, however, eventually to yield to the demand for popular elections, which was supported by the British Government as soon as the victory at el-Alamein (October 1942) had finally removed the threat of Axis invasion from the Middle East. In Syria the elections of 1943 brought into office the National Bloc with Shukri al-Quwatli as President of the Republic and Sabahiddin Jabri, Jamil Mardam, and Faris al-Khouri as parliamentary leaders. In the Lebanon also nationalists were successful and the leader of the 'Constitutional Bloc',

[1] For details, see A. H. Hourani, *Syria and Lebanon* (London, RIIA, 1946).

Royal Institute of International Affairs 0-4 (no date)] 954 M3 Middle East

Bishara al-Khouri, became President with the pan-Arab Riyad as-Solh as Prime Minister; these nationalists were not satisfied with mere titular sovereignty but claimed the reality of independence, and in November 1943 a Free French resort to force against them was reversed only by a British intervention, endorsed by the United States Government. The Free French were thus constrained to transfer most branches of the administration to the Syrian and Lebanese Parliaments, but retained control of the local 'Troupes Spéciales' and obstructed the proper equipping of the Syrian gendarmerie. The French intention was to make fully vital concession of authority conditional upon the conclusion of a Franco-Syrian treaty which would give France much the same strategic, economic, and cultural advantages as Britain had retained in Iraq by the already obsolescent Treaty of 1930. In March 1945 Syria and Lebanon had been admitted as sovereign states to membership of the United Nations and of the League of Arab States. The Syrian nationalists were not prepared to subordinate their sovereignty to an imposed alliance with France, and the landing of a contingent of Senegalese troops immediately after V-Day (in disregard of a personal appeal of Churchill to de Gaulle) was regarded in both Syria and Lebanon as clear evidence of a French resort to coercion. Sporadic outbreaks of violence between the Syrian gendarmerie and the local nationalists on the one hand and the French garrison on the other became general, and when, at the end of May 1945, the local French Commander carried out a bombardment of Damascus the British Government ordered their Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, to intervene, by force if necessary, to restore order in a region whose security was vital for British communications in the still-continuing war in the Far East. The crisis accelerated the complete withdrawal of all foreign troops, concerning which the demands of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments were supported by the Security Council; the process was completed in Syria by 15 April 1946 and in Lebanon by the end of the year.

Between the wars, the French Mandate had allowed political development in Lebanon to produce at least a façade of parliamentary democracy, with arrangements between the Muslim and Christian leaders on the division of political power and perquisites, and the active commercial and intellectual life of Lebanon made progress with a minimum of government interference. In Syria, however, local separatisms which French policy had encouraged made it very difficult for any Syrian Government to knit the people together from Damascus; the

Syria and Lebanon

1952 and he has obvious affinities with General Naguib of Egypt whom he visited later in the year.

The threat of Zionism is considered very real in Syria and Shishakli has declared that Syria has never given up hope of a revision of the present position. Between March and May 1951 a [illegible] Syria, but hostilities between Syria and Israel were localized and stifled without leading to a general outbreak of war. All Syrians wish Israel ill; fear of Israeli expansion remains and is fostered by the Government.

In internal politics, the most progressive measures which have yet been considered are land reform and the partition of state lands. There is little unrest among the people, who generally want to live their lives without undue government interference. Nationalists of two kinds exist: a nascent patriotism that has for the first time the support of the rulers, and a narrow xenophobia that, while less extreme than in Egypt, is more pronounced in Syria than in Lebanon.

(ii) Lebanon

Lebanon is a republic of which the Chamber of Deputies was till 1953 elected by direct manhood suffrage but in that year women were permitted to vote in the elections. By convention, the President of the Republic must be a Christian and is normally a Maronite, the Prime Minister must be a Sunni Muslim and the President of the Chamber a Shi'i Muslim. The table on p. 466 above shows the division of parliamentary seats between the religious sects; a scrupulous observance of these quotas is evident even in the civil service establishments. The existence of a Christian majority is held to be essential for the survival of Lebanon as a separate state and so, in June 1950, it was found convenient to extend the franchise to Lebanese abroad (of whom the majority are Christian) and to increase the number of deputies from 55 to 77, but in November 1951, under a new electoral law, the number was reduced to 66. The Muslim rate of natural increase is higher than that of the Christians and it is probably for this reason that no census has been taken since. In other ways the constitution and administration are similar to those of Syria already described.

Internal Politics

As in Syria, a European type of political party system has not yet evolved and the struggle has been not only between different cliques of ruling families backed by great commercial wealth, but also between these rich groups on the one hand and

ballot, a relative majority shall be sufficient. Should the votes be equal, the oldest candidate shall be elected. §43

Art. 43 (as amended October 17, 1927). Members of the Chamber shall only vote if they are present at the meeting, voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

Art. 44 (as amended October 17, 1927). The Chamber alone has the right to maintain order at its meetings through its President.

Art. 45. (as amended October 17, 1927). All petitions to the Chamber must be made and submitted in writing. They may not be presented in person or at the bar of the Chamber.

Art. 46 (as amended October 17, 1927). The remuneration of members of the Chamber shall be determined by law.

CHAPTER IV—THE EXECUTIVE POWER

Art. 47 (as amended October 17, 1927, May 8, 1929, and June 9, 1943, and November 7, 1947). The Chamber of Deputies shall elect the President of the Republic by secret ballot and by a two-thirds majority of the votes. After the first ballot, an absolute majority shall be sufficient. The President shall be elected for a term of six years.* He may be re-elected only after an interval of six years. No persons shall be eligible for the office of President of the Republic unless he fulfills the conditions of eligibility for the Chamber of Deputies. §43, §45

Art. 50. Before assuming office, the President of the Republic shall take an oath of fidelity before Parliament to the Lebanese Nation and the Constitution, in the following terms:

"I swear by Almighty God to observe the Constitution and laws of the Lebanese People and to maintain the independence of the Lebanon and its territorial integrity."

Art. 51 (as amended October 17, 1927). The President of the Republic shall promulgate laws after they have been adopted by the Chamber. He shall supervise their execution and for that purpose he shall have the power to issue regulations, but not to modify the actual laws or act with their provisions.

He shall have the right to pardon. Amnesties may not be granted except by law.

Art. 52 (as amended October 17, 1927, and November 6, 1947). The President of the Republic shall negotiate and ratify treaties. He

* See the Provisional Constitutional Law of May 21, 1926, art. 1 (p. 501 infra).—Ed.

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shall bring them to the knowledge of the Chamber as soon as the interests and safety of the State permit.

Treaties involving a charge upon the finances of the State, commercial treaties and, in general, treaties which cannot be denounced at the expiry of each year shall not be definitive until they have been adopted by the Chamber.

ART. 53 *(as amended October 27, 1945, and January 11, 1947).* The President of the Republic shall appoint and dismiss Ministers, from among whom he shall select a Prime Minister; he shall make all appointments to regard to which the method of appointment is not otherwise determined by law; he shall preside over national ceremonies.

ART. 54. Every instrument issued by the President of the Republic, with the exception of those relating to the appointment and dismissal of Ministers, must be countersigned by the Minister or Ministers concerned.

ART. 55 *(as amended October 27, 1945, and May 6, 1954).* With the approval of the Cabinet, the President may by Decree, the reasons being specified, dissolve the Chamber of Deputies before the legal expiry of its mandate.

In that case, the electoral bodies shall meet as provided for in Article 25, and the new Chamber shall be convened within fifteen days after the results of the elections have been proclaimed.

ART. 56 *(as amended October 27, 1945).* The President of the Republic shall promulgate laws within one month after the date on which the law, definitively adopted, is transmitted to the Government. When the promulgation of a law has been declared urgent by a special vote of the Chamber, he must promulgate it within five days.

ART. 57 *(as amended October 27, 1945).* Within the time allowed for promulgating laws, the President of the Republic may request, not more than once, a further discussion of a law; this request may not be refused.

When the President of the Republic makes use of this right, he shall not be required to promulgate a law unless it has been adopted by the Chamber, after a second discussion, by an absolute majority of the lawful members of that Assembly.

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Art. 58 (*as amended October 17, 1927*). By means of a decree 642
issued with the approval of the Cabinet, the President of the Re- 643
public may put into force any bill which has previously been declared
to be urgent by the Government in the order for its transmission
issued with the Cabinet's approval, and on which the Chamber has
not given a decision within forty days of its communication to the
Assembly.

Art. 59 (*as amended October 17, 1927*). The President of the Republic may adjourn the Chamber for a period not exceeding one month. He may not do so more than once during the same session.

Art. 60 (*as amended January 21, 1947*). The President of the Republic may not be called to account for acts performed by him in the discharge of his duties except in the case of violation of the Constitution or high treason; his responsibility in respect of offenses under the ordinary law shall be subject to the ordinary law. He may not be charged with these offenses or with violating the Constitution or high treason, except by the Chamber of Deputies, its decision being adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the whole Assembly; he may not be tried except by the High Court provided for in Article 80. The functions of the Public Prosecutor at the High Court shall be exercised by a judge appointed each year by the Court of Cassation at a general meeting.

Art. 61. Should the President of the Republic be assaigned, he shall be suspended from his functions and the Presidency shall be vacant until the High Court has rendered its decision.

Art. 62. Should the Presidency of the Republic be vacant for any reason whatsoever, the executive power shall be temporarily exercised by the Cabinet.

Art. 63. The salary of the President of the Republic shall be fixed by-law. During the President's term of office, it may not be increased or reduced.

Art. 64. The Ministers shall have the supreme direction of all the services of the State which come under their respective Departments. They shall be responsible, each in so far as he is concerned, for the application of the laws and regulations.

Art. 65. No person may be a Minister who is not a Lebanese.

Art. 66 (*as amended October 17th, 1927*). Ministers shall be

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 MI Middle East
LEBANON MEI

jointly and severally responsible to the Chamber for the general policy of the Government, and individually responsible for their personal actions. The Government's general programme shall be drawn up and put before the Chamber by the Prime Minister or by a Minister acting on his behalf.

Art. 67 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* Ministers shall have free access to the Chamber and shall have the right to address it whenever they so request. They may be accompanied by one or more officials from their Department.

Art. 68 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* When, in accordance with Article 37, the Chamber declares that a Minister no longer possesses its confidence, that Minister shall be so required to resign.

Art. 69 *(abrogated May 8th, 1929).*

Art. 70. The Chamber of Deputies shall have the right to arraign Ministers for high treason or for grave dereliction of their duty. The decision to arraign a Minister may only be taken by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the whole Assembly. The civil responsibility of Ministers shall be determined by a special law.

Art. 71. A Minister who is arraigned shall be tried by the High Court.

Art. 72. A Minister shall leave office as soon as he is arraigned. The Minister's resignation shall not prevent proceedings being taken or continued against him.

Part III

(a) Election of the President of the Republic

Art. 73 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* One month at least and two months at most before the expiry of the term of office of the President of the Republic, the Chamber shall be summoned by its President to assemble for the purpose of electing the new President of the Republic.[1]

Should it not be thus summoned, the Chamber shall meet of its own accord on the tenth day preceding the expiry of the President's term of office.

Art. 74 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* Should the Presidency become vacant through the death or resignation of the Presi-

[1] See the Provisional Constitutional Law of May 22, 1926, art. 2 (p. 302 below).—Ed.

57; Davis S-4 (no date)1953 MI Middle East
LEBANON ME1

dent, or for any other cause, the Assembly shall meet immediately 642
and of its own accord to elect a new President. If the Chamber is 643
dissolved at the time the vacancy occurs, the electoral bodies shall be convened without delay and, as soon as the elections have taken place, the Chamber shall meet as of full right.

Art. 75 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* When the Chamber meets to elect the President of the Republic, it shall constitute a purely electoral body and not a deliberative Assembly. It shall proceed solely, without delay or discussion, to elect the Head of the State.

(b) REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Art. 76 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* The Constitution 642
may be revised on the initiative of the President of the Republic.

In such a case, the Government shall submit to the Assembly a draft constitutional law.

Art. 77 *(as amended October 17th, 1927).* The Constitution may likewise be revised on the initiative of the Chamber of Deputies. This right shall be exercised as follows:

During an ordinary session and on the proposal of at least ten of its members, the Chamber may recommend, by a two-thirds majority of its lawful members, the revision of the Constitution. The articles and questions referred to in the recommendation must be specifically enumerated and defined.

The President of the Chamber shall transmit the recommendation to the Government, requesting it to prepare a draft constitutional law.

Should the Government approve the Assembly's recommendation, it shall prepare the respective draft law and submit it to the Assembly within four months; if the Government does not agree with the Assembly, it shall return the recommendation to the latter for further discussion. Should the Assembly maintain its recommendation by a majority of three-fourths of its lawful members, the President of the Republic may either accede to the Assembly's request, or issue an order for its dissolution, and proceed to new elections within three months.

Should the new Assembly decide that revision is necessary, the

57:Davis S-4 (no date) 1953 Mi Middle East
LEBANON MFI

306

PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL LAW PROVIDING FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF RE-ELECTING HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC[1]

MAY 22, 1948

642 The Chamber of Deputies has passed and the President of the
643 Republic hereby promulgates the abovementioned law in the following terms:

Art. 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 49 of the Constitution, it shall be lawful, as an exceptional case, to re-elect the President of this Republic now in office for a second term; but it shall not be lawful to re-elect him for a third term until six years have elapsed from the date of expiration of his second term of office.

Art. 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 73 of the Constitution and as an exceptional case the Chamber of Deputies shall be convened at a summons of the President of the Republic within a month from the date of the promulgation of this Constitutional Law for the purpose of electing a President of the Republic. The term of office of the elected President shall begin from the date of the termination of the term of office of the President now in office.

[1] English translation and information through the courtesy of Professor M. F. Abcarius, American University of Beirut, and Captain Lawrence J. Evans, Jr., United States Army, Beirut.—Ed.

In Lebanon the preparations for the elections took longer to complete. The main question at issue was that of the distribution of seats in the new Chamber. It was agreed that the Chamber should consist only of elected members, not as previously of a majority of elected and a minority of nominated ones; but Dr. Tabit's suggestions for allocating seats between the sects were opposed by the Moslems. M. Helleu, who had succeeded General Catroux as Delegate-General in June, was compelled to replace Dr. Tabit by Petro Trad; and finally an agreed settlement was reached by which the Christian sects would have 30 seats and the Moslems 25.

Elections were held at the end of August. As in previous elections, the differences between the candidates were largely personal; but there was also a conflict of principle involved, the more extreme supporters of Lebanese independence, with Emile Edde as their most prominent figure, being opposed by the more moderate advocates of autonomy, led by Bishara al-Khuri, and the Arab nationalists. The former were completely defeated in spite of the support given them by the French authorities. On September 21st the Chamber met and elected Bishara al-Khuri President of the Republic by 44 votes to nil.

The new President asked Riyadh as-Sulh to form a Ministry. A Sunni Moslem, by origin from Southern Lebanon, Riyadh as-Sulh had for long been recognized as one of the leaders of the Arab nationalists in Lebanon, and had been an associate of Shukri al-Quwatli in the 'Istiqlal' group.

The new Ministry was composed as follows:—

Prime Minister and Minister of Finance	Riyadh as-Sulh.
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Education	Habib Abu Shahla.
Minister of the Interior and of Posts and Telegraphs ..	Camille Shamun.
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Public Works	Salim Taqla.
Minister of Defence and Hygiene	Amir Majid Arslan.
Minister of Food Supply and National Economy	Adil Usayran.